

the sad truth of the matter is
i was really lucky i got arrested.
otherwise, i'd have got fired
the minute i showed up at work
drunk as i was.

NO QUARTER

it was so typical.
i was driving on an expired license plate sticker
hoping to sneak by for a few days till payday
when i could buy a new one.

by now you've probably guessed
that i got the ticket.
that's typical enough for the average person
but i got this ticket
just down the street from the currency exchange
about five minutes before i'd have bought the new
sticker.

how could they possibly expect me
to be a decent, law abiding citizen
after that?

SOAKIN DONUT

we stopped at the dunkin donut
for coffee and sweet rolls.
i paid the cute young doughnut girl
with a twenty dollar bill.
when she gave me the change
she accidentally got my twenty
mixed in with it.
i was only too happy
to call her over
and give it back to her.
she was very grateful
thanked me profusely
wished me a long happy life
and so on.

about ten minutes later
she asked if we'd like refills on our coffee.

when we said yes
she poured the coffee
and cheerfully requested
seventy four cents for it.

pretty big of me
i thought
not to strangle her
right on the spot.

-- Paul Stroberg

Lombard IL

STRAWBERRY LIP GLOSS

For too long now, I have been employed as a bouncer at a nightclub near my home. It is not intellectually stimulating work and I have not met many girls there that I wanted my mother to meet also. But, it is okay work if one has big muscles and little ambition. I am told I have both. When I am not busting heads, things can get pretty dull at work. It can be boring. My mind when left idle tends to ruminate over all my body's infirmities. Usually, I like to concentrate on my most debilitating injuries, but sometimes, as a change of pace, I suppose, I like to think about trivial, but vexing, maladies like canker sores, rug burns and plantar warts. On one particular evening, the evening I am preparing to tell you about, my mind fixed on my chapped lips. Now I know that chapped lips aren't exactly spinal meningitis, but let's be fair, chapped lips, seriously chapped lips, can be very painful. I tried not to think about them. I tried very hard to just ignore them. I tried and tried. Try as I might though my lips still hurt. Chapped lips don't just go away. They require chapstick. And chapstick I didn't have. I started bitching about them. Bitch, bitch, bitch, bitch, bitch. Finally, the ticket girl offered me some of her strawberry lip gloss. It wasn't an act of kindness. She was just tired of hearing me bitch. What I mean is, it's not as though she were the Florence Nightingale of chapped lips, or something. Anyway, I accepted her offer to use the strawberry lip gloss.